



SOLDIERS OF THE BLACK LIONS

STRENGTH AND HONOR

BLACK LION 6

2ND BATTALION
28TH INFANTRY
REGIMENT

BLACK LION PROWL
VOLUME 1 EDITION 3

JANUARY 2009

THE BLACK LION PROWL

LTC John Reynolds – john.reynolds6@us.army.mil



Team. As I write this note, the very last Soldiers from TF 2-28 are trickling in from Kuwait. After 45 Days of wandering the Desert Sands of Kuwait, we are now wandering the Desert Sands of Iraq; Lots of great things have occurred this month to include our Soldiers receiving mail. It was a great day as many of us received the first boxes that came in via snail mail from Germany and the States. The team didn't take long to set themselves here at FOB Kalsu. Everywhere you look you see the paw prints of the Lions setting the standards. We have established our VTC capability and we will begin to transition to Company level VTC instead of long hours of the entire battalion. The FRLs in coordination with the commanders and the Family readiness groups will coordinate and provide the dates to CPT

Entering Lion Country

Canete for execution. We will have our great Birthday Party here on the FOB on 25 January; So if you can send your goodies and cards for the Soldiers please do so.

The area is very stable as we move into the Provincial election period. What a great opportunity to witness history. This is the first time in over 30 years that the people of Iraq will vote in their provincial level leaders without the direct assistance of the Coalition. It is their show and they are doing an extremely great job coordinating it.

Since my last letter, we have changed the organization a little—but nothing that should affect the FRGs—all FRG channels will remain the same. LT Branch's platoon (C/3-66) moved to B Company and LT Garrison's platoon moved to C/3-66. The Mortars were attached to B/2-28 and the Scouts were attached to C/3-66 AR. We also brought in a new BN XO into the fold—MAJ Fidel Ruiz. He comes to us with a great reputation and lots of good ideas.

LT Fischer will be moving on to 3-66 AR up north and join LTC Rago and the Black Knights. Every day, is a great day and the Soldiers are doing a phenomenal job. I very humbled to be part of this great team. Let the Netzeberg Knights know we think of them every day and wish them all the best on their report cards. We included a crossword puzzle just for them.

Take Care

Black Lion 6

John Reynolds



BLACK LION 7



THE BLACK LION PROWL

CSM Patrick K. Akuna Jr. – patrick.akuna@us.army.mil

From the CSM's Corner, I would like to wish all of our Black Lion Soldiers and Families E Hauoli Makahiki Hou (Happy New Year). It is hard to believe that the Black Lions have been on the ground for over a month and have welcomed in the New Year. Time sure is flying by.



Well, we finally received our orders and are in the process of moving the Task Force north into Iraq to linkup with the rest of the brigade at Forward Operating Base Kalsu in the Babil Province.

I foresee that we will spend the month of January completing our move north, shipping and receiving our vehicles and equipment from Kuwait and conducting sustainment training as well as local patrols to gain situational awareness of the surrounding area.

On the 25th, we will celebrate the birthdays of our Black Lions who were born in the month of January. And on the 27th, we will conduct another promotion board for our Soldiers who aspire to become Black Lion Non-commissioned Officers.

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All in all, we are doing great and moral is "HIGH". Black Lions are continually setting and enforcing standards and showing everyone what "Right" looks like.

Damn, I'm proud of this Battalion.

To all, take care and God Bless and Ahui Hou (See you soon).

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BLACK LION HISTORIAN



The Black Lions have surpassed their remarkable goals in the past couple of months. From garrison operations in Grafenwoehr, Germany to pre-deployment operations in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, the Black Lions have prepared themselves to conduct a successful counter-insurgency in their operational environment. In January of 1901, the Regiment first saw combat service in the Philippines, serving as a counter-insurgency force against Filipino Muslims, also known as Moro guerrillas. The parallels between the Iraq insurgency and the Moro insurgency are closely related, and they serve as a reminder of the Black Lion standards.

The atmospherics shared between both counter-insurgencies included the need for partnership and friendship; and dignity & respect. Leaders in both instances formed partnerships and

friendships with the local population. In the Philippines, leaders would purchase Moro goods, therefore supporting the economy. A strong Moro economy created a favorable attitude towards the Americans. Currently in Iraq, emphasis is on creating jobs for the poor and to improving the quality of life. Consequently, the poor and disadvantaged are provided legitimate opportunities to survive, rather than succumbing to criminal and terrorist enterprises. Whether training and working with the Germans or operating and assisting the Iraqis, the Black Lions have always fostered and embraced partnership and friendship.

Some individuals during the Moro insurgency were propelled by their past combat experiences, and kept the attitude that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian." Many of the difficulties faced in both counter-insurgencies were the fight for treating everyone with dignity and respect. Old combat veterans in both cases pushed for a more hard-lined stance against the insurgency. Although heavy kinetic operations were sometimes effective, the collateral damage of killed or maimed women, children, and innocents would usually exacerbate hostilities against the Americans. More individuals began to notice that treating more people with dignity and respect would be more effective to suppressing the insurgencies. The question changed from "how do we kill the insurgents?" to "how do we avoid killing innocents?" and focused on building relationships with the locals, being culturally sensitive and aware, and treating everyone with dignity and respect. The effects of this paradigm shift produced a stronger and friendlier population; a

population that would stand against insurgents because they had someone to stand with.

The parallels between the Moro insurgency and the Iraq insurgency are infused with the Black Lion history. They are testament to the redundancy and similarities of most conflicts and they are diligently studied and implemented within the Battalion. The Black Lions of today have understood the past and acknowledge the importance of upholding standards; standards which will ensure our success.



Black Lion colors at sunset

BLACK LION SHEPHERD

An anonymous wag once said, "A resolution is in one year and out the other." By now most of us who made resolutions have broken them...with gusto. Others, in a philosophical turn, refrained from making resolutions, avoiding the hazard of not following through on them.

There are other strategies, of course. For instance, I have resolved to stop hitting myself in the ear with a claw hammer. Since I have never *deliberately* hit myself with a hammer, this resolution should be easy to keep.

I wonder what the life expectancy of a New Year's resolution is. Most resolutions won't see Valentine's Day intact. Less than half will even see Ground Hog's Day, (and every day of deployment is Ground Hog's Day.)

Still, there is some charm to the promise of a new beginning. This time of year we can see it all around us. Be careful how you talk to people, you never know who is on their new year's nicotine fit, as they resolve to kick the tobacco habit. We

A single experience in our lives can set us back, but it is seldom that one event will have a lasting positive impact. Events stand at the doorway to positive processes, but it is important not to confuse the event with the process. As a preacher, I spent years looking for the perfect sermon that would inspire a new generation of goodness. I never preached that sermon because I never developed it. I will again take up the quest for the perfect sermon some time this year...or next year, when I get around to it. Most of my sermons are forgotten by Monday, at about 1900 (7PM), right before Monday night football, even if the Niners are playing. I know this because I forget sermons faster than I can plagiarize

them, no matter how hard I try. I have forgotten most of the sermons I have preached, while I was preaching them. Forgetting a sermon we have heard is not so troubling, when



PFC Hardy works on the Black Lion wall; in FOB Kalsu

recently canvassed the Black Lions for their resolutions, and a large percentage of our Soldiers have resolved to give up dipping and smoking. (I can't blame them, hell smokes too, and that's not a pleasant thought either.) Back home, the gymnasiums will be crowded for a week or two as folks make an honest effort to get in shape. We all know it won't be long before the treadmills sit idle.

Self improvement is the most difficult task we will ever undertake. Simply making a resolution does not change our behavior. Resolve is the root word in "resolution," and resolve requires hour by hour, day by day determination.

Events do not bring about positive change... processes do.

Right now, I may not be able to make all the sweeping changes required to make me a better person for the upcoming year, but I can do a little today, we all can...and that is all that is needed.

put into perspective. I cannot remember what I had to eat last week, or even yesterday, (I'm a little fuzzy about breakfast, in fact,) but I have not starved. The process of persistent eating has kept me alive, just as the process of regular religious observation has fed my spirit. Therefore, when it comes to a resolution, it is more important that I resolve not to smoke the next cigarette than to resolve to stop smoking this year.

Processes require tracking. In the military we track everything, from vehicle readiness to individual training. A nebulous sense of doing better does not qualify what success will look like, nor does it quantify how near to success we are. Setting and meeting little goals is harder, yet more effective,

than setting sweeping objectives with no method or timeline. It is easy to resolve this year to write the great American Novel. It is infinitely harder to resolve to write five hundred words today.

"Just this once," is the mortal enemy of personal progress. I know I should pass up the ice cream bar after dinner, but how harmful can one little bitty bowl of ice cream be...just this once? According to leading mathematicians, "Just this once" times sixteen becomes "just this sixteen." That equates to about three million grams of fat and forty million calories. That is at least an extra seven pounds I could have lost. Habits, good and bad, are built day by day, one failure or success at a time.

Still, little setbacks should not destroy our resolve. Failure is only final if we accept it. If I succumb to temptation, I can do better next time. Next year this time we will all be one year older, with or without our bad habits and with or without that extra seven pounds. Getting older is guaranteed (trust me, I know), but getting better is a matter of choices, little choices. We are so often what we think. If I consider myself vulgar, it is easier for me to make excuses for my cussing. If I think of myself as a gentleman, (or lady, for our Family Members) I will be able to rise above the foul language habit. God created us in his image, to succeed and do well. If we internalize this understanding,, that we bear the image of the Creator, we will be able to do better because we will consider ourselves capable of it. People tend to do what they want. Am I the caliber of person who wants more health and better social



PFC Young says "hello" from FOB Kalsu, Iraq

skills? An important part of the process of change is first telling ourselves that we are able to change, and that we want to.

God is standing by to assist our quest toward self improvement. He was as ready December 31 as he was on January 1, and he will be ready some time in March when I get around to it. Right now I may not be able to make all the sweeping changes required to make me a better person for the upcoming year, but I can do a little today, we all can... that is all that it is ...and that is all that is needed.



SPC Duzen enjoys New Years Eve

more health and better social



BUSHMASTERS



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Winning Bushmaster Football Team

Hello and greetings from Kuwait. We hope that everyone had a happy and safe holiday season back home. We also welcome our new families from 2nd Platoon, C/3-66 Armor, "Predators" to the Bushmaster team and FRG.

Although we have not changed locations since the last newsletter, we are busy planning and training for our future missions in Iraq. We began the month with Close Quarters Marksmanship (CQM) and Counter Improvised Explosive Device (CIED) training. The training lasted for three days, and we were instructed by trained professionals who study enemy tactics and implement those into various scenarios throughout the training. The instructors began the training with a four-hour long block of instruction on CQM. During the CQM training we reviewed our marksmanship skills for close quarters combat, and then applied those skills during a live-fire exercise where we engaged targets at various distances ranging from 5 to 2 meters away. Following the CQM training, we transitioned to the CIED portion of the training. For the CIED training we were given a mis-

sion to conduct a patrol along a route littered with IEDs and insurgent role players. Upon receiving the mission, leaders came up with a plan and used their troop leading procedures to get the soldiers ready for the patrol. After a day of planning and rehearsals, we set off in the early morning to begin the mission. During the actual mission we saw various scenarios we may encounter while conducting operations in Iraq. Training such as this is vital to our success as a company because we can take the tactics and lessons learned from this training and apply them to wherever we go.

We also started conducting route familiarization patrols to the Kuwait-Iraq border. The Bushmasters were the first company in the battalion to conduct the patrols. The purpose of the patrols is for leaders to practice their troop lead-

ing procedures, mission planning, and the positioning of equipment in the vehicle. Since the patrols are training in nature, we did not cross the Iraq border; the most common sights we saw were the numerous camel herds scattered along the route. We learned that the camels are not afraid of our HMMVs and come right up our vehicles (and sometimes they stop in between moving vehicles). We conducted patrols during both the day and the night in order for us to be prepared for any possible scenario. Like the CQM and IED training, the route familiarization patrols have better prepared us for conducting combat operations in Iraq. We anxiously look forward to receiving our mission for Iraq and feel our time and training in Kuwait has better prepared us for the task ahead.

The company also conducted a few days of Quick Reaction Force (QRF) training. Each platoon took two 8-hour shifts of QRF duty, which requires them to

receive, prepare, and roll-out on a mission in 30 minutes or less. The training is challenging because the platoon does not know what their mission is going to entail or where they are going until the call comes from the Battalion Tactical Operations Center (TOC). At the end of the two-days of training, the platoons had set-up flash traffic control points (TCPs), conducted casualty evacuation, and investigated different events.

The infantry Soldiers are not the only ones getting the most out of their time in Kuwait. The Bushmasters Fire Support Team (FIST) is hard at work training on their fire support tasks. In order to prepare for our future operations in Iraq, the FIST has been diligently training at the call for fire trainer located at Camp Buehring. The call for fire trainer simulates fire support missions and tasks that they have not practiced since leaving Germany. Each platoon is assigned a Forward Observer (FO) to provide fire support during missions and patrols throughout our area of operations in Iraq.

In spite of all the training Bushmasters have done, they have still found time to enjoy the holiday season. On the December 14, the Battalion came together and had a Christmas party at Camp Beuhring. The company sang Christmas carols, listened to Chaplain Beals, and even received a visit from Santa Claus. After our attempt at caroling, a professional Air Force band took the stage and continued the celebration for the remainder of the night.

On Christmas Day the Battalion rallied for the good old tradition of American football. The Bushmasters fielded two teams for the tournament. At the end of the day, the Bushmasters continued their tradition of athletic dominance in the Battalion and took the 1st Place Trophy. In their first game, Team Bushmaster beat the Headquarters and Headquarters Company. The second game was a little closer and required four overtime periods before we defeated C/2-28 IN. However, the final game was the best. Bushmasters defeated their 3rd Platoon (currently with C/3-66) by a final score of 15-14. SPC Olsen was the team MVP by scoring the final two touchdowns and the final extra-point to seal the win despite going behind 14-0 in the first few minutes of the game. Following our victory, LTC Reynolds awarded the team with the trophy and the bragging rights to call themselves the champions. The team consisted of: PV2 Schneider, SGT Reclusado, SGT Reese, SPC Armenta, 1LT Wagnon, SPC Olsen, PFC Smith, SPC Coombs, and PFC Lopez. The remainder of the day was spent relaxing and spending quality time with fellow Soldiers. The company also set up a projector and watched Christmas movies on a homemade movie screen made from a bed sheet. Before eating Christmas dinner, the commander surprised everyone by giving them company T-shirts with the Bushmaster logo. Overall Bushmasters made the most out of the Christmas holiday despite being away from family and friends. Bushmaster Soldiers remain motivated as they start to move north into Iraq. The new mailing address is the following;

Soldier's Name

TM B/2-28

FOB Kalsu

APO AE 09312



Soldiers from first Platoon on QRF duty

please stay in touch with us and the Family Readiness Group. Please send questions and/or concerns to SGT James Cooper, Tina Ausbrooks or use our email addresses. Kaphar Hunnu Bhandu Marnu Ramro! Bushmasters!



SPARTANS



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Your friendly, neighborhood Spartans wish you greetings and a happy New Year from the sandbox of Kuwait. It has been anything but the typical line up of events for Charlie Company these past few weeks.

Most of the time in Kuwait for the Spartans is filled with training and equipment preparations for work in Iraq. When available, Charlie Company is taking every opportunity to check and double check the essentials; stocking up on supplies and sharpen their war fighting skills.

The Spartans had quite a bit of time at the weapons ranges. At two of these ranges, Spartans who had the opportunity to attend Blackhawk Shooter training in Germany, spread the good word of ambidextrous shooting and proper use of cover and stances while shooting to the rest of Charlie Company. Using make-shift barriers and covered fighting positions, set up by HQ Platoon, the Spartans practiced under the watchful supervision of the qualified Blackhawk Shooters. It did not take long for the Spartans to take hold of the training and take it further. At the second range, the Spartans jumped right from crawling to sprinting with the Blackhawk Shooter training. The Spartans were changing magazines, switching firing positions, and alternating firing hands as if they had been doing it for months instead of weeks, demonstrating ability to learn.

As part of Battalion-wide training, the Spartans practiced their convoy movements in high IED threat areas. Personnel working for the camp put the Spartans through the ropes as they went



Ssg Reyes and Cousino take a quick break from combat marksmanship to pose for a photo

through disabled vehicle recovery drills, IED drills, and threat elimination procedures. While there were many curve balls thrown, the Spartans maintained their cool demeanors and succeeded.

Investigation procedures were also practiced by the Spartans in anticipation of work to be done in Iraq. The Spartans furthered their skills in Sensitive Site Exploitation under the watchful instruction of

During the deployment the Spartans will persevere with Strength & Honor and will settle for nothing short of victory



PFC Brown plots coordinates during Call For Fire training

well experienced teachers here in Camp Beuhring. A practice house full of actual tricks used by insurgents was set up for the use of students so they could get real-world experience searching a suspected insurgent safe house. Additionally, the Spartans received more instruction on tools they will use to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The training in tactical questioning and biometric investigation tools will be invaluable for the Spartans' in Iraq.

The Spartan Fire Support Team had ample opportunity to practice

their skills recently as they attended a live fire range with the Battalion's Mortar Platoon. The Crazy Mortar-men polished up their targeting skills while the FISTERS observed round after round impacting on target. In addition, the Spartan Forward Observers joined the rest of the Black Lion Fire Support Element in the digital Call for Fire Trainer. The Spartan FO's piled on the hours in this trainer, sharpening their skills on basic and more advanced lethal fire missions. There is no doubt the FISTERS have established a great foundation to

provide the Infantrymen of Charlie Company with superb fire support assets.

One of the final Spartan training events consisted of a combat marksmanship competition hosted by HQ Platoon. The platoons rolled out to the range and were given the task of confirming their weapons zero in ten minutes then fire four rounds at ten targets of varying size at twenty-five meters within 4 minutes. To measure their attention to detail the Spartans were not allowed to shoot any one target with more than four rounds or be penalized with a score of zero. The consolidated number of shots on target was then

averaged for the final score for each platoon. Second Platoon, BAMFs were the overall champs of the company by a large margin. Well done, Second!

The Spartans found the time to celebrate the Holidays as best as they could while in Kuwait. A Battalion flag football tournament was held in which the Spartans held their own and demonstrated their will to win. Food was plentiful. The Camp Buehring Dining Facilities did their best to bring a little feeling of home by serving traditional holiday dishes. The need for some rest and relaxation is not lost upon the command in the Black Lions Battalion and was much appreciated by the Spartans.

While the time has been unexpectedly long in Kuwait, it has not been in vain. In the eyes of all Black Lions, it has given them more time to prepare for the daunting mission ahead. There is no question that the Spartans are prepared to negotiate any obstacle in their path. During the deployment they will persevere with Strength & Honor and will settle for nothing short of victory.



PAIN

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Charlie/3-66 "Pain" (The company formerly known as "Cannibals") would like to wish everyone a happy New Year and a merry Christmas! The soldiers, NCO's, and officers

of C tank have been busy preparing for the word from higher on where the company will be going. There have been many training exercises and classroom experiences the company has gone through during the past month to prepare for the upcoming movement.

One change the company has undergone since the last newsletter is the company's call

sign. The company is no longer known as the Cannibals. The new company call sign is now "Pain". The significance of the new call sign is that it is a historical call sign used by previous units affiliated with 3-66 AR.

It is always necessary to congratulate and recognize individuals who have worked hard. There are several promotions and also several awards earned by soldiers and NCO's in C tank. PFC Sotomayor, SSG Ballantyne, and SPC Radtke have been awarded the good conduct medal early in the month of January, 2009. There are also three promotions that will take place during the month of January. SSG Woodberry was promoted from SGT in late December of 2008. PFC Sotomayor was promoted as well in December, but was not correctly congratulated during the December

newsletter because he was promoted around the 15th of December. The word that SGT Mal-

and their families for the hard work necessary for their promotions and awards.



Pain Company

lari was to be promoted arrived on the 1st of January, which sounded like a nice way to usher in the New Year. Last but not least was SPC Wade, who is now to be officially recognized as CPL Wade. Congratulations to all the individuals

One change the company has undergone since the last newsletter regards the company's call sign. The company is no longer known as the Cannibals. The new company call sign is now "Pain".

Everyone knows that 2nd platoon will represent C tank with honor and integrity, and lead the fight anywhere they go. The other side of losing a platoon is gaining another. So C tank now has the lethal capabilities that the 2nd platoon of B mechanized

Charlie tank will not be moving to Iraq with every platoon that the company deployed to Kuwait with. 2nd platoon was moved to B mechanized, and C tank received a platoon from B mechanized. It is a given that 2nd platoon will be missed while they endeavor their deployment with a new company.

brings to the fight. The change for each platoon in transition has been extremely fluid. The receiving companies have accepted their new platoons with open arms, and would like to welcome each individual to their new company.

Training during the past month has been both intense as well as extremely pertinent to the situation on the ground in Iraq. The company has sent several mechanics to an operator's course for the MRAP vehicle. The sensitive site exploitation team has gone to classes to teach them how to use one of the company's systems more effectively. The entire company has completed a sensitive site exploitation exercise which consisted of groups of people essentially tearing apart a room in

search of digital media, weapons, explosives, or anything else the enemy might use to further their cause. The FIST team has completed five days of training in the call for fire trainer. The exercise the FIST team conducted

included calling for smoke, illumination, and close air support. Each platoon sent out several vehicles on a convoy to the Iraq border in order to refine their skills and trouble shoot equipment prior to the big movement north. The entire "Pain" element went through a regional intelligence class that went through the situation that exists not only in Iraq, but also the entire Middle East in relation to Iraq. A range was conducted for close quarter's marksmanship and also for the sniper rifles that are in each platoon.

The time spent in Camp Buehring was invested in training towards the oncoming experience in Iraq.

Force protection and mission accomplishment is a theme for all training completed during the company's stint at Camp Buehring. The soldiers here spent their down time differently. The headquarters platoon regularly played each other in basketball and worked out at the gym. The line platoons appeared to make a second home at the gym, seem-



SGT Smith and SSG Deidiker posing

ing to be there a quarter of the day. There have been some grumblings heard from a few individuals regarding the length of their tenure at Camp Buehring. It is most probable that Camp Buehring will be missed whenever the company moves onto the next leg

in their journey. The many amenities located at Camp Buehring, along with the convenience of having three defacs and two decently sized gyms, will not go un-missed once the company moves on to a less "luxurious" duty station. Camp Buehring, once viewed a pit stop on the way to Iraq, transformed itself into an opportunity to further train individuals and teams for the tasks ahead of them.

It is likely that the secret is out. The Black Lions will be going to Iraq soon and their destination is known. The battalion will be going to FOB Kalsu. The length of tenure at Camp Kalsu is not known and neither is the mission of the Black Lions while at FOB Kalsu. What is known is that where ever the battalion goes, Black Lions will live by their motto "Strength and Honor". The Black Lions will continue the tradition of the battalion by setting the standard at FOB Kalsu, just as in the past the unit has done where ever they have gone. All the members of Pain Company would like to say that everyone back home is missed and that everyone at FOB Kalsu can't wait to be home.



DAWGS OF WAR



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The Dogs of War spent most of December at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, where they trained and prepared their new Theater Provided Equipment (TPE) for the movement north to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Kalsu. The soldiers spent their Christmas Eve and Christmas Day feasting on dinners served at two dining facilities. On New Year's Eve the company was allowed some down time to sleep, read, or call family and friends. On New Year's Day some platoons joined in a 5K run hosted by Camp Buehring and the company packed its containers for movement to FOB Kalsu. On New Year's Day the company also enjoyed the camaraderie of the weekly cigar smoke session. The company will start out 2009 by moving north to FOB Kalsu where it will assume many types of missions, including route clearance, EOD escort, bridge and patrol base assessment, and partnership missions with the Iraqi Army. The most important overall goal for the company this deployment will be to mentor the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police and provide a professional example for them to emulate. Additionally the company and bat-



After almost a month of operational control under Task Force 2-28 Infantry the company will rejoin the 9th Engineer Battalion upon arrival at FOB Kalsu!

talion will work with the State Department run Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in order to build Iraqi infrastructure to support the population.

In January of 2009 ,Iraq will have its first provincial elections! These will allow Iraqis to choose their government leadership at the provincial level and give the people more voice at the national level. We are especially curious to see how the elections fall in the Babil and Karbala provinces where we will conduct missions. Finally after almost a month of operational control under Task Force 2-28 Infantry the company will rejoin the 9th Engineer Battalion upon arrival at FOB Kalsu!



WOLFPACK



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It has been a month to remember, we left our loved ones on a cold and dark December night. Boarding a bus bound for Rammstein, the 6 hours it took to get there for most soldiers was a time for rest, however for a lot of first time deployers, it was a time of uncertainty and anxious feelings. We pulled into Rammstein at sunrise and waited for what seemed like forever, 11 hours later we boarded another bus to take us to the airfield where we got on the plane bound for Kuwait. This plane ride was the realization for most that

The extensive training that Wolfpack has accomplished over the past month has shown that we are without a doubt ready to take on and fully accomplish whatever mission is placed before us.

this is actually happening. We arrived in Kuwait and boarded another bus to and had to struggle to stay awake during a death by power point presentation and welcome to the theater

briefing. Then it was off to find our living arrangements and download the trucks with all of our bags

and rucksacks. Once we settled in and had our cots picked out and bags unloaded it was time to rack out just for a little bit.

During our first week in Country we zeroed our weapons, attended counter insurgency training, and counter IED training, as well as set up a fully functional and operational Training Room and TOC. We have pulled countless hours of connex and motor pool guard. We designed and had made one of the best looking guidons in

the Battalion, HQ PLT has been working diligently and efficiently to ensure that the fourteen other sections are fully taken care of with the aspects of being in a combat environment. The extensive training that Wolfpack has accomplished over the past month has shown that we are without a doubt ready to take on and fully accomplish whatever mission is placed before us.

Being in Kuwait is definitely different to everyone that has been here before. From 24 hour Starbucks and Subways to a Day Spa, it is almost like being back at home. It has been fun though, on Christmas day we had a flag football tournament which B co 2-28 IN won,

but we gave it our best shot. And then there was New Years Eve, with a DJ and dancing and raffles all leading up to the countdown to the New Year.

At least we have phones



SPC Angelella at BIAP

and internet access to stay in contact with our friends and families spread all over the World.

After being told we were pushing north and then it was changed, and then it happened again. We are now, finally, pushing forward into Iraq to accomplish our mission there. HQ's has been working hard at work and play, several of us have been going to the gym twice a day and eating a more strict diet to ensure we are fit to fight and looking good for our families. We hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We miss all you and look forward to seeing you during our leave. This deployment will be over soon and we will be home before you know it.



Festive Chief Rassavong



SCOUT PLATOON - RECON



Scouts pose for the camera after a uniform inspection.

Scouts of 2-28 are spending time in Kuwait preparing themselves in order to be ready for future operations in Iraq. In the meantime the Scouts spent Christmas and New Years together reminiscing of loved ones back home.

On December 13-15th, the Scouts excelled in a route clearance exercise including identification of IED's, the insurgents tactics, and a follow up culminating exercise. The Scouts used the training as an opportunity to try new techniques taught by instructors to counter insurgent IED emplacements. The Scouts have sent SSG Smith, SGT Thompson, SPC McDade, PFC Fincher and PFC Machado to train on the new MRAP vehicle that has been used to protect soldiers against mines, direct fire and IED ambushes. The MRAP may be new, but the Scouts are happy to use the vehicle to enhance soldier's capability to survive first contact in theater and to accomplish the mission. As time goes on the Scouts are constantly prepping equipment, vehicles, and learning the new SOFA agreement between Coalition Forces and Iraqi government.

1LT Dewey and SFC Desanto recently took charge of the Scout Platoon a few months prior to their deployment to OIF 08-09 adding valuable experience to the leadership of the RECON PLT

Scouts newly promoted SPC Holland now SGT Holland joins the NCO core. Sgt. Holland has been a large part of the morale and success of the Scout Platoon. Congratulations to SPC Raulston and his wife Jessica for their 1 year anniversary as well as SPC. Vargas and his wife Christina on their 2 year anniversary. 1LT

Dewey and SPC Pittman shared birthdays on the 8th of December. The Scouts wish a Happy Birthday to SSG Caiado's wife Barbara on the 26th of December. Scouts want to wish a Merry Christmas and a happy new year to all the loved ones, and thank you for all the family support.



SGT Holland reciting the NCO Creed after his promotion.



MORTAR PLATOON - CRAZY



The past month has been both busy and uneventful for the Mortars. The Mortars have been in Kuwait since December 1, 2008, and are eager to have their skills tested on the battlefield. They recently received their vehicles which will be an important piece of their arsenal when quelling the insurgency and rebuilding the infrastructure of Iraq.

One of these new vehicles is the new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle, or MRAP for short. This new vehicle is designed to protect soldiers from the dangers of mines and IED's. Due to the large size of these new vehicles two of the Mortars, CPL East and PFC Ashley, were sent to specialized training so that they can train other drivers in the Mortar platoon the correct and safe way of operating this new vehi-



Mortar Platoon PCC/PCI their mortar carriers, and 120mm mortar gun tubes in preparation of live fire.



Clean weapons are the key to combat readiness.

cle. While the Mortars were in Kuwait, Christmas came and went. They made the best of the holidays with phone calls and Video Tele-conferences with family. Most of the Mortars also indulged in a large Christmas lunch at the DFAC where copious amounts of food were consumed, followed of course by long naps.

These past months have seen several birthdays and anniversaries. SSG Campbell celebrated a birthday on 27 December, and PFC Mayer and his wife Katheryn celebrated his one year anniversary on 20 December. PFC Bates and his wife, Marisol, celebrated their one year anniversary on 26 December this year.

All the members of Crazy Platoon would like to say that everyone back home is missed and that everyone at FOB Kalsu can't wait to be home. We will complete the mission and return from this deployment with Strength and Honor.



MEDIC PLATOON - SCALPEL



Over the past month the medics have been busy conducting sick call for the soldiers of TF 2-28. In between sick call and prepping for the move north, they have been honing their medical skills with multiple trauma classes and skills challenges. Some of the more eventful things the medics have been able to do during sick call is they have been given the opportunity to prep and conduct minor medical procedures to include sutures and toenail removals. While the platoon has several young and first time deployers, the training that they have been conducting has improved the overall capabilities of the medical platoon. Each individual is given the opportunity to plan and conduct a trauma class of his choice which has only reinforced their trauma skills. They have also been given several trauma scenarios with which to better understand what it takes to take care of these types of patients. With so much going on they even



Ssg Kupau announces the winner of the medic challenge

New members of the Medical Team include the following: MAJ Funches - BN Surgeon, ILT Crutchfield - BN PA, and ILT Looney - Medical Platoon Leader

took the time to conduct a medical skills challenge between the soldiers of the Forward Aid Station (FAS) team and the soldiers of the Main

Aid Station (MAS) team. Their focus was on team building, the effectiveness of their ability to take care of patients in a combat environment, the ability to work in a stressful situation and on building team cohesion.

With all the training going on they took a time out on the 25th to have a Christmas

party and gift exchange. Overall the Christmas party was a great success. Each medic received a gift that they could use even though it may not have been the one they wanted as we played Dirty Santa. As we prepare to move north we will say goodbye to the transit aid station that has served us so well over the past month. We have also received praise from the local Troop Medical Center (TMC) for all we have done to improve the aid station while we have been here. The medical platoon of TF 2-28 Infantry overall took charge of the building, cleaned it up, restocked both the pharmacy and medical supplies and made it their own. We definitely left an impression for all to emulate and follow.



Medics of TF 2-28 enjoying themselves during the 2008 Christmas Party



SUPPORT PLATOON



Support Platoon has been kept busy during the Holiday season in Kuwait. They not only completed the training of zeroing weapons, Crew Serve Weapons Classes, Counter IED Exercises but they also sent Soldiers to MRAP Driver's Training. The new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) Vehicle is beginning to replace the HMMWV as the primary means of transportation for Soldiers. PFC Pickard, PFC Luffman, and PV2 Dieffenbach took part in a three day class here in Kuwait and then flew to Tallil, Iraq for a four day class on this new piece of Equipment. Support Platoon is also sending SGT Coursey, Master Driver Qualified, to the 4 day course in Iraq.



Support Platoon, HHC 2-28 Road Dawgz

The rest of Support Platoon has been kept busy preparing their vehicles for Combat. The Battalion received the majority of its equipment before and during Christmas time. The vehicles came in various levels of readiness. Support worked diligently to receive, assess, and improve the vehicles assigned to them. Anything that could be fixed at the operator level was quickly corrected while larger issues were properly pushed to the Battalion's Maintenance teams. The HMMWV's were also modified by maintenance and then they were personalized for each crew's needs. The gun truck crews have been installing and checking all of the communication, weapons, and security systems on each of their vehicles.



Lunch Break

Support Platoon has been able to take advantage of the Holiday season and have some fun. On Christmas Day Support Platoon took part in the 1st Black Lion Kuwaiti Christmas Classic Football Playoff. Eight teams from across the Battalion came together and took part in a single elimination tournament on a beautiful Christmas Day in Kuwait. Although it was a team from Bravo Company that prevailed HHC, lead by Support Platoon, they had a very good showing making it to the Semi-Finals before losing to the eventual Champs. SPC Lindsey, PFC Quiles, SGT Stoute, SSG Cooper, PFC Enis, and PV2 Jones all enjoyed celebrating the Holiday with a little Gridiron Competition. Support Platoon soldiers with loved ones in Germany were able to take part in several Video Tele-Conference (VTC) opportunities. Thanks to CPT Canete and the S6 shop they were able to talk to and see their families live and in color, lessening the strain of being away for the Holidays. Although the Platoon seems to be sharing a Cold which is making its way through the ranks, overall things are going well. 1LT Lee the defacto Battalion Photographer came by and at the request of the platoon took a picture of the entire platoon with two vehicles in the Motor Pool at Camp Buehring. Support Platoon also had T-shirts made. With some guidance from SFC Newcomb, SPC Ledezma showcased his artistic abilities by upgrading the Battalion's Black Lion T-shirt. It is much like the Black Lion Shirts with the Crest on the front left chest and "Strength and Honor" across the back, with an added touch of Support Platoon to the back.

Support Platoon has begun the New Year packing up and preparing to leave Kuwait. They did so while feeling confident and optimistic on fulfilling their upcoming vital role in support of the rest of the Black Lion Battalion.



FISTERS



The month of December was filled with training opportunities for the Fire Support Platoon while we waited for the word to move north. We had the chance to focus on all aspects of fire support and information operations. We spent time on patrols and in the Call for Fire Trainer (CFFT). The FISTERS even found the time to celebrate Christmas together despite our busy schedule.

The battalion conducted a Command Post Exercise (CPX) this month to rehearse our Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) when conducting patrols and Tactical Operation Center

(TOC) operations. The company fire support teams had the opportunity to conduct driver's training so that the Soldiers had the opportunity to become familiar with the vehicles they will be operating in Iraq. The fire support teams also were assigned the responsibility of producing "Drumbeats" for their companies. Drumbeats are designed to keep families and friends informed of what the Black Lion Soldiers are doing. These are also posted on the battalion webpage.

The CFFT is the most realistic tool that we have to be able to conduct training on call for fire. It is a computer system designed to simu-



FECC Soldiers enjoy a merry Christmas

late an environment, which is displayed on a projection screen, in which the Soldiers can adjust rounds on to targets. This training allows the Soldier to keep his knowledge of call for fire fresh in his mind. All of the fire supporters participated in the basic call for fires as well as practicing calling for Close Air Support (CAS). CAS is when the fire supporter on the ground talks to the aircraft flying over head and directs them on to the target, a very effective way to eliminate targets without placing Soldiers in harm's way. Not to mention that it is a lot of fun using the CFFT.



White Elephant Christmas

Of course December also brings Christmas. While we were unable to spend the holidays with our immediate families, we found the time on Christmas day to get together with our surrogate one. "Sandy" Clause even found us way out here in the desert. He brought presents for everyone. The FISTERS participated in a "White Elephant" Christmas. There was 1 present for every Soldier who drew numbers from a hat. They then picked a present out of the stack and sat back down. The trick of it though, was that the individual who picked his present after you had the option to steal your present and give you his instead. Now you could only have your present taken from you twice before you

gift was the platoon headed over to dining facility 1. They have real plates and silverware to eat with, a welcome change to the plastic plates and flatware we get on our side of the camp. All in all we had a pleasant Christmas together but look forward to next year when we can be with our families.

And finally the



CFFT Training

training they were able to conduct was invaluable and I am positive it will be put to great use and aid in our success throughout the deployment. The FISTERS look forward to moving into Iraq and beginning their mission.



The Black Lion wall at Camp Beuhring

The mighty Black Lions have successfully moved from Camp Buehring, Kuwait to FOB Kalsu, Iraq. Wherever they go, the Black Lions build on their reputation and leave their mark.



The Black Lion Walls are being painted at FOB Kalsu



DFAC (DINING FACILITY)



The soldiers of HHC "Wolf Pack" Dining Facility are doing great as we get use to our new living arrangements. We are in good spirits and proud of being able to do our part to serve our country in the war on terrorism. During the past month we have experienced great chow. The facilities that we have are the USO, AT&T, MWR, GYM, just to name a few, and yes, we do have a PX and these facilities are among the best. The weather that we have been receiving here has been the most difficult thing to get use to with all different types of elements you experience on a day to day basis. The guys have been receiving training in physical fitness as well as MOS and Combat related skills. Again we are in high spirits and our morale is as good as it can be. You should be very proud of your loved ones. We all are very committed to accomplishing the mission and goals that we have been giving and we take pride in what we do.

The chow here is not what we are use to back home with our love ones. By stating that, we can say that the dining facilities are excellent and provide a meal that provides all nutritional value without the

home cooked flavor that we all enjoy. Although it isn't the best no one complains because we are all happy to receive an all-you-can-eat meal.



PFC Thomas cleans his weapon after a hard day's work

The salad bar is always stocked with all the toppings one can ask for or even put on a salad. All in all its not home but it will do.

The facilities here are all that we could ask for. The USO which we have visited offers free movies, internet, games, and a variety of books to read. A lot of the guys go there to check the most anticipated emails from friends and family, which include the latest pictures and the latest thing back home and to see how everyone is doing and to let there family members that they are doing alright. The GYM and MWR allow us to break away for a minute or two for a friendly rivalry in volleyball, basketball, and flag football which allow us to show our competitiveness.

The weather is the least favorite condition topic around here because we are unfamiliar with it being this way. The nights get real chilly and the days are really warm. It has yet to rain, which is good news for the fair weather guys.



SPC Garcia reviews his notes from First Aid training

that we must continually train up in, or they will fade away.

In closing with all these day to day task and activities which we call our deployment we can not help but to know that someone somewhere is praying and hoping for our safe return home to them. All the soldiers are in high spirits and there morale is high and we can not help but to know by the training that we receive our leadership and by the grace of God we will make a difference in the global war on terrorism and place our mark in the history books. God speed and God bless you all.

“WOLF PACK”

Often the wind picks up and sends dust scattering through the air and through us as well it's an experience. Luckily, we have nice tents to escape the weather when we're not out training preparing for our mission to help our nation.

Training is the one thing we look forward to participating in. We do PT five days a week sometimes six after lunch it really boost the soldiers morale. A PT session usually includes a lite warm up with a

high intensity muscular or cardio workout followed by a slow cool down and stretch and sometimes we conduct a sport afterwards. Another part of the training is combat related training which makes us better at fighting and winning the

“We are in good spirits and proud of being able to do our part to serve our country in the war on terrorism. We all are very committed to accomplishing the mission and goals that we have been giving and we take pride in what we do. “

war on terrorism. We also have MOS training daily as well. These are the critical skills that we love to do and

signed up to do, all skills



SPC Pittman tending to his M4



STAFF SECTIONS-S1 (HUMAN RESOURCES)



The Human Resource Section commonly referred to as the S-1 Shop touched ground in Kuwait on 2 December 2008. Since then several personnel actions have been completed in the last 31 days at Camp Buehring in a bid to accomplish organizational goals. The S-1 section is made up of 1LT Wallace, SFC Wise, SGT Bayles, SGT Lubwama, SPC Sais, PFC Flores and PFC Floyd who all carry different responsibilities that are geared towards aiding in the accomplishment of the Sections and the Battalion's overall mission while deployed.

A few of the pertinent jobs held by the S-1 is the tracking of personnel movement and the Battalion's overall numbers within theater and Germany. Through Shift Change, Command and Staff and BUB update briefs, personnel statistics are reported to the Battalion Commander on a daily basis. Some examples of S-1 tracking has been the movement of personnel in and out of Kuwait to FOB Kalsu, FOB Talil, BIAP, Camp Arifjan, Ali al Salem, Germany (Rear Detachment) and the United States. The S-1 section has also employed DTAS (Deployed Theater Assignment System) and DCIPS to aide in the efficiency of tracking personnel including civilians and DOD Contractors in theater as well as any received casualties. Red Cross messages and Emergency leave processing have been some of the special actions that the S-1 section has been involved with while in Kuwait. A total of four

Soldiers have left on Emergency leave to be with their families during difficult times since the Battalion has entered Kuwait borders. The process of sending a Soldier on Emergency is different from that in Garrison because they must attend the required (DCS) Deployment Cycle



Support brief, get approval from the Battalion Commander on DA form 31, and have transportation arranged for the Soldier to arrive at their authorized emergency leave destination to be with family for about 2 weeks. While in Kuwait promoting Soldiers has remained a dynamic part of the S-1's day to day activities. The section has processed promo-

tions of lower enlisted Soldiers from E-1 thru E-4 as well as NCO's from Sergeant to Staff Sergeants. The Battalion held a promotion board in December for Department of the Army selected NCO promotions effective for 1 January 2009. While at the board, the Command Sergeant Major and Company First Sergeants professionally questioned Soldiers recommended for promotion by their leaders in order to verify eligibility and the potential to perform at the next level.

Through our time in Kuwait, the S-1 Section has verified Good Conduct Medal eligibility throughout the Battalion. Every Service member is entitled a Good Conduct Medal Award for every 3 years of service. We submitted the AAA 095 roster to the companies at the beginning of December and got them back in a timely manner to process the Awards for approval. A few Soldiers from each company were denied the Good conduct medal due to adverse action.

Pay inquiries and entitlements have been major issues that the Section has dealt with from the day with stepped foot in Kuwait. We had to make sure that all Soldiers are getting their Combat Pay which comprises of Hazardous Duty Pay, Imminent Danger Pay, Basic Allowance for Subsistence and Family Separation Allowance for all married personnel. I would like to comment that this has all been accomplished and all Soldiers are getting paid correctly as reflected on the end of month (LES)

Leave and Earnings Statements.

Environmental Morale Leave, Freedom Rest Program and the Qatar Pass Program are programs that have occupied the section in the last 30 days while in Kuwait. As per the Brigade Fragmentary Order, all Soldiers are entitled Leave and it has been our duty to allocate leave slots to the companies from February to September and verifying that the entire Task Force is accounted for as per the Personnel Statistics. Soldiers will depart theater during their slotted leave month for 15 days chargeable leave to a destination of their choice. It's important to remember that the Section had to make sure that during any given leave month, the total number of Soldiers on leave does not exceed 12.5 percent of the Task Force in theater.

In addition the S-1 Section has tracked progress of all person-

nel actions submitted prior to the deployment, actions such as Command Sponsorship, IPCOT's, ICOT's, FSTE's and more. Soldiers that submitted actions for approval were desperate for answers on the progress and we managed to have positive tracking of such actions through daily communication with the Rear Detachment S-1 representative in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

Evaluations have not been left untouched. Officer and Non Commissioned Officer Evaluation reports have been tracked for submission and uploaded to the Human Resources Command (HRC) to be placed in the Soldier's Official Military Personal File. So far the tracking of these evaluations has been a smooth process which in turn has reduced the number of late evaluations submissions in the Battalion.

Last but not least, toward the end of the 30 day period in Kuwait, the Section has geared efforts to Manifesting the Task Force in preparation for the movement up north to FOB Kalsu. Soldiers have been placed on respective rosters for flights to Kalsu which included the Advance party (ADVON), Main Body 1 through 3 and the two trail parties.

In a nutshell the last 30 days have been eventful for the S-1 Section for they have accomplished a wide range of tasks from tracking assigned personnel numbers and movement, promoting Soldiers in theater, processing awards, verifying pay and entitlements, slotting personnel for leave, processing enlisted and officer evaluations and manifesting Soldiers for the movement to FOB Kalsu.

Taking care of the Black Lions' greatest Asset - Soldiers!



STAFF SECTIONS - S2 (INTELLIGENCE)



The enemies we face today in our current operational environment are deadlier than ever. They are protean, stealthy, and they operate on their own terms. They don't have to rely on expensive equipment or technology to create havoc; merely, a small anonymous bomb or kidnapping will impose greater fear than an announced, deliberate attack. The S2 shop's duty is to reveal the enemy in a normally nebulous and complicated environment, and to provide advice to the Battalion Commander so he can make the best decisions. The overall operations of the S2 shop consist of conducting the steps of intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB). This means that, upon finding an operating environment, we define our territory by researching the terrain, populace, culture, historical activity, and key influential personalities to name just a few. Next, we describe our operating environment by researching how the defining attributes affect our missions. We do this by conducting critical and predictive analysis, thorough (although sometimes expedient) research, and constant collaboration and corroboration with adjacent military and civil units. This systematic and ongoing process then builds the template for our third step: evaluating the current threat. During this process, we create templates to

Overall, the work is tiring and mentally taxing, but the intelligence and analysis derived from everything assists Black Lion soldiers and coalition partners in remaining safe.



SGT McAffrey is a proud MI Soldier and Black Lion

determine how our enemy thinks, reacts, and operates. We look at the enemy's capabilities so we can produce the effects that will affect his center of gravity. Lastly, we determine the possible courses of action the enemy would take on coalition forces by creating the situational template (SITEMP). We brief the Battalion Commander on this final product and it gives him a better idea of how he should task organize and it assists him in making some of his decisions. Overall, the work is tiring and mentally taxing, but the intelligence and analysis derived from everything assists Black Lion soldiers and coalition partners in remaining safe. The Iraqi insurgency requires a group of individuals who can actively track, locate, identify, and define the enemy in a unique manner. TF 2-28 S2 shop is up to the task.



STAFF SECTIONS - S3 (OPERATIONS)



Three from the "3 shop" in Kuwait, CPT Vance, 1LT Kelso, CPT Atwood.

Staffed with life-takers and heartbreakers, the S-3 Shop never stops running at FOB KALSU. MAJ Erik Krivda, the BN S3, oversees an S-3 Shop comprised of Officers, NCOs, and Enlisted Soldiers. CPT Brad Vance and CPT Travis Atwood serve as the S3 Plans cell, coordinating current and future operations for the Battalion. SGM Steven Spillman serves as the OPs SGM, supervising all operations of soldiers in the TOC.

1LT Bryan Kelso, recognized simply as "The War Chief" and 2LT Steve Milauskas are the Battle Captains, they run the daily TOC operations. The soldiers of the S3 shop persistently endeavor to ensure that trackers are always updated, systems are functioning, and most importantly that coffee is always available. Since arriving at FOB Kalsu, the S3 Shop has continually planned and coordinated for the well being of the Battalion. Charged with coordinating "Operations", a term with infinite latitude, the Battalion's fate hinges on our shop. Our efforts ensure that every soldier in the Battalion has a clear task and purpose as they successfully accomplish their missions. Clearly, the S3 shop is the best; any challengers from football to orders production will be soundly defeated. "Go Big or Go Home"- Black Lion S3 Shop



STAFF SECTIONS-S4 (LOGISTICS)



Napoleon once said an Army marches on its stomach, and the Black Lions are no exception. Every Black Lion soldier re-

broken equipment. The Shop ordered IT equipment to support the battalion operations center and the 4 companies. The Iraq

half of the S4 shop oversaw the acceptance of thirty nine million dollars worth of deployment equipment, sent the equipment down to Camp, and joined the rest of the shop in Kuwait. When the Black Lions packed up and headed north, the S4 shop split up again. The Iraq half headed north ahead of the Battalion to set up supply systems. The Kuwait half stayed behind to load all the vehicles and containers for the journey north and to close all the maintenance and supply accounts the Black Lions used in our 2 month pit stop in Kuwait.

Black Lions, Strength and Honor!



PFC Estevez and SPC Colon hard at work in the S-4 Shop

quires logistical support to complete his mission, and the S4 shop provides that logistical support. From before the 28th Infantry Regiment landed in Kuwait to after they headed north, the S4 shop has been busy supporting and sustaining operations. The Shop split up, half went to Iraq early, and half stayed in Kuwait.

The Kuwait half of the S4 shop accepted our vehicles and containers from Germany. After the dust settled from the movement, the shop set up operations on Camp Buehring. S4 established accounts that refit soldiers with clothing throughout the deployment. S4 oversaw the opening of accounts to draw supplies and to fix





S-6 COMMUNICATION



The HHC 2/28 S-6 Shop has helped to support this battalion in many ways since we first touched down in Kuwait. We have aided the battalion by tending to any automation problems within the TOC, as well as holding down the tactical side. This includes the maintenance of the communications equipment in the TOC in addition to inside all vehicles. Our soldiers have worked weekends, holidays and every hour of the night to ensure that the Black Lions are fit to fight in Iraq.

In the TOC our automations soldiers, SPC Musser and SPC Garrison assisted in the overall set up, running cables and making sure that all key components of this battalion could operate how they are expected to. They both did an outstanding job seeing that this was done properly. We created accounts for all personnel that needed them in the battalion. Our shop provided a soldier at every hour of the day to see that TOC operations went smoothly at all times. PFC Huggins and SPC Johnson pulled night shift at the TOC, and any issues that arouse were handled swiftly. The CPN representatives that are attached to us have been very helpful in the TOC as well. Without these high speed soldiers in the TOC, I don't know how anything would get done.

In the tactical shop we worked around the clock



SPC Orzel Schooling SGT Price on the capabilities of the SKL.



Black Lion Commo never stops

to make certain that all vehicles were green on communications. We installed the FBCB2 System in every vehicle that needed one. SPC Geary, our FBCB2 guru did an excellent job facilitating the installation of these systems, along with the assistance of the rest of the shop. Classes on the SKL and MBITR were given to all sections that attended. SPC Orzel did a tremendous job training the soldier to standard on the necessary operations of the SKL and MBITR. We provided parts for those who were lacking on anything. Parts that we didn't have on hand were ordered or picked up from the SSA

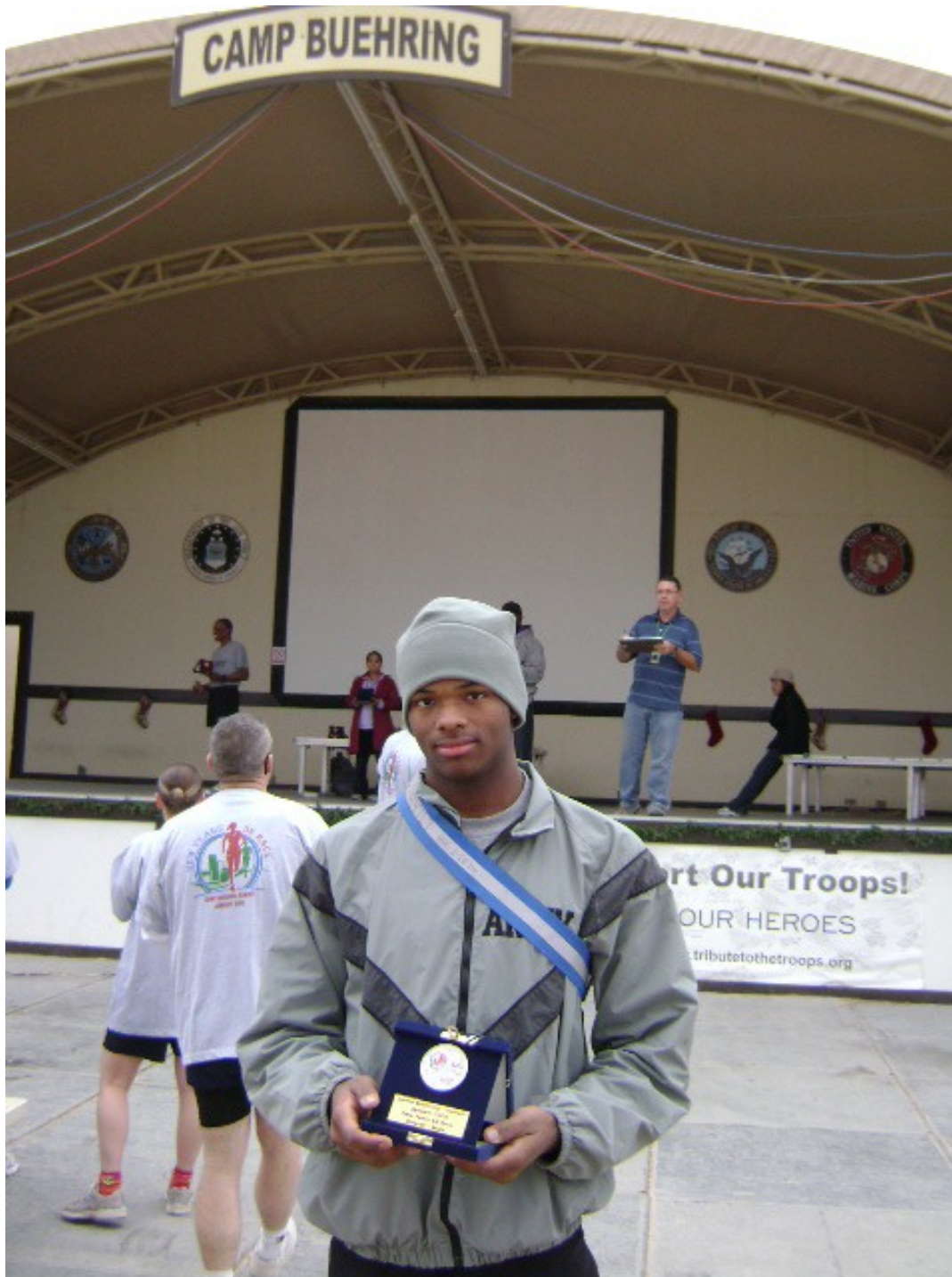
on Camp Buehring. We also provided assistance to our representatives from other companies, as we should. The TPE equipment received was inventoried by us and supply. We went through all the trucks and eliminated all of their missing radio equipment. Not only did we install the equipment, but we performed a PMCS on every piece of equipment in every vehicle, to include the intercom systems.

Many computers, FBCB2s, and other equipment that needed to be repaired by civilians were brought to Camp Arifjan on a regular basis. SPC

Westlund helped to coordinate all the maintenance with our communications equipment. CPT Canete, SSG McNicholas, and SPC Westlund took many trips to Camp Arifjan to make sure everything

was getting done the right way. Had we not done this we would be lacking on equipment in both the automations as well as tactical shops. Thanks to these individuals we can now operate to standard.

Overall the S-6 has provided numerous capabilities necessary to this unit's success in Iraq, or wherever for that matter. I am confident that this level of dedication throughout our shop will carry over as we move to our next location. We are here to support this battalion in any way we can, and we will. **BLACKLIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!**



The S-6 shop's very own PFC Huggins won second place in the Camp Buehring New Year's Day 5K, with a time of 18:23. He placed only ten seconds behind the winner. Huggins would have won had he not stopped to tie his shoe. The Unit Ministry Team would also like to thank PFC Huggins for his splendid performance singing at the Black Lion Christmas Prayer Luncheon.

BLACK LION CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Test your Black Lion Knowledge Puzzle on Next Page

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| 29. DA 2166-8 | 30. SUN TSU AUTHOR |
| 32. '68 OFFENSIVE | 34. BELT OR MAGAZINE FED |
| 36. SENIOR ENLISTED ADVISOR | 37. VIETNAM 1LT MOH |
| 38. UNIVERSAL DONOR | 41. FM 3-21.5 |
| 42. THERMOPOLAE | 44. FA MOH |
| 46. BH6 BIG 5 #4 | 48. AR 600-85 |
| 49. BL6 IMP #2 | 50. 4-25.11 |

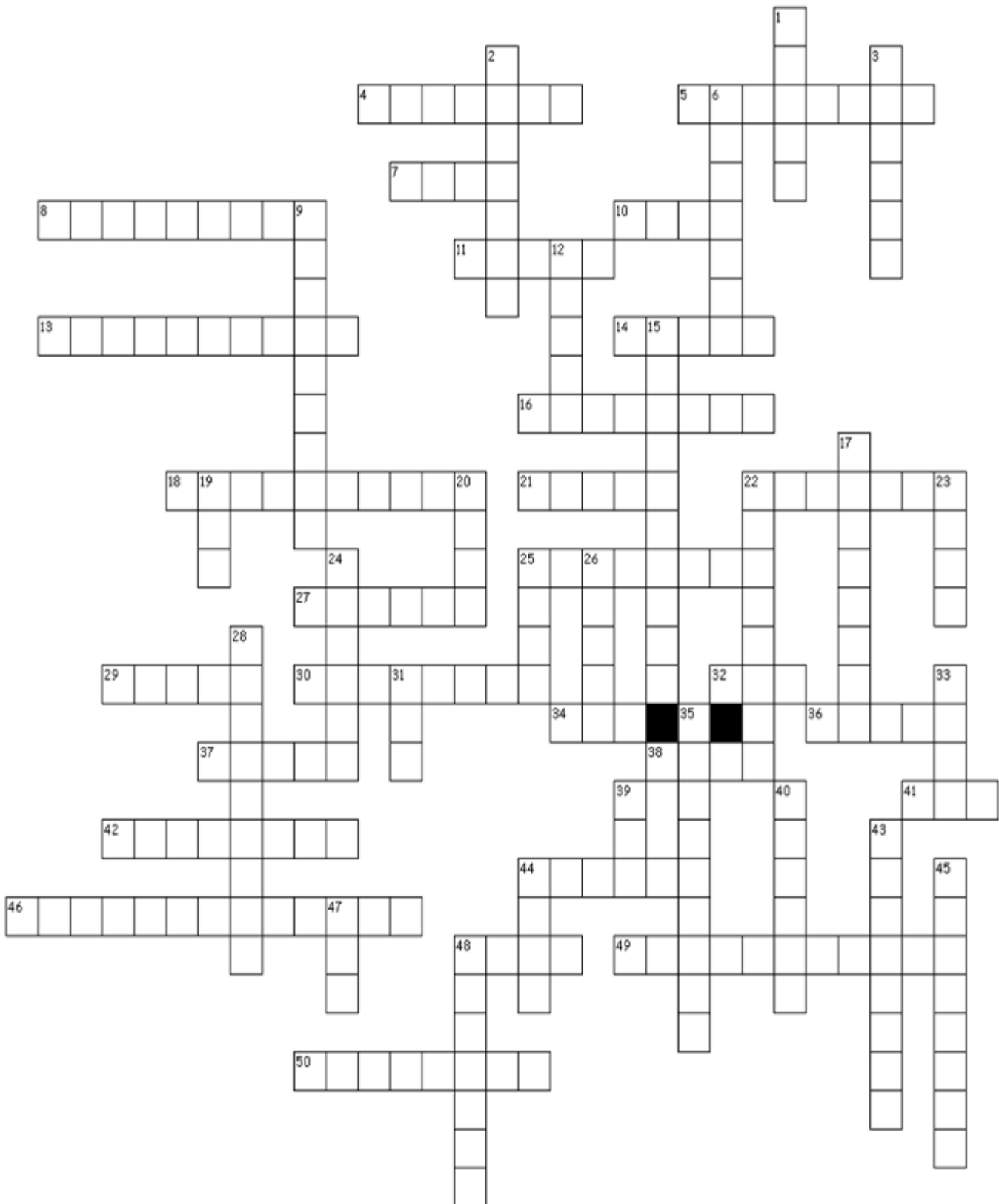
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| 22. APPROVING AUTHORITY OF MOH | 23. K9/C4 |
| 24. IMMEDIATE ACTION | 25. DRAW, CLIFF, _____ |
| 26. PHOENETIC EYE | 28. 11/11/1918 |
| 31. POISON TREE | 33. HOUSE OF _____ |
| 35. CIVIL WAR COURTHOUSE | 39. NEW KPOT _____ |
| 40. WWII MOH 2LT | 43. 1st CAMPAIGN |
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| 47. BRADLEY | 48. CREIGHTON _____ |

BLACK LION CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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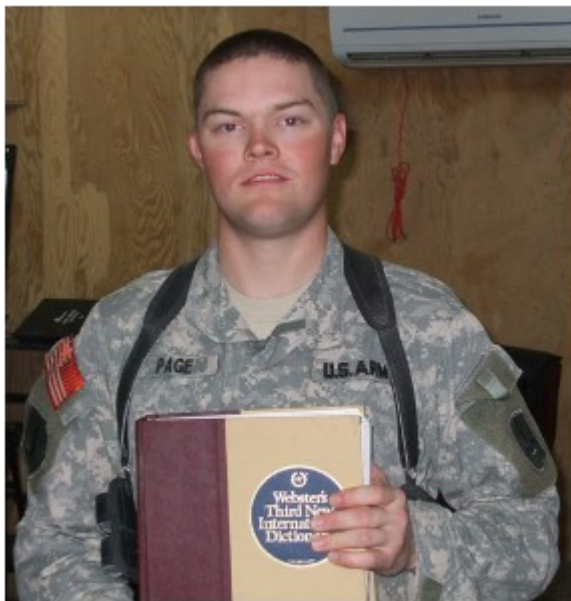
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LIONS AT LARGE

The Black Lion Prowl went to the streets to see what Soldiers were resolving to do in the new year.



SPC Page, Charlie Tank: "To learn bigger words in order to be more grandiloquent and euphemistic, (And to get pepper-sprayed by the end of the year.) "

SSG Horstman, C Co. 9e: "To Kiss a girl and finally like it, Lose 20 pounds, Make a friend, Grow a mustache, Learn to read faster."

PV2 Mendes C Co. 2-28 "To dress up as a chicken and Pro-wrestle"



SSG Suh, Charlie Tank: "I don't need to make much of a resolution, since I am 98% perfect. The 2% I need to work on is in my lip, so I'm going to give up dipping."

This New Year, the Black Lions are committed to becoming better than ever. Since 2-28 Soldiers are already a cut above the rest, they will have to work harder and be more creative than ever. Here are some of the New Year's resolutions our Black Lions have made. Some are funny, some are serious, but all represent the spirit and good-natured hope we anticipate for a Black Lion Two Thousand Nine.

PFC Cook, C Co. 2-28 "Improve my PT Score and continue developing my relationship with my wife. "

SPC Fielding C Co 2-28: "Cut back on smoking, Make all my daughter's birthdays from now on."



CPL Derush, Assault CP: I'm going to end every sentence with either the phrase "Black Lions" or the word "Cantigny."

PFC Flores, C 2-28 "to Bench press 350 LBS Squat 550 lbs"

SFC Guzler, C9E To enhance my ability and interoperability with asymmetric warfare and SOF type forward training and planning to get more battle focus vs. knowledge.

PFC Johnson, C Co 2-28: "To make the rank of specialist before I leave Iraq, be physically fit, benching 250 LBS. I can't wait to see my wife on R&R leave"



LIONS AT LARGE

The Black Lions prowled the streets to see what Soldiers were resolving to do in the new year.

SGT Wright. C co 2-28 3rd PLT "To sneak into the DFAC undetected by the most insurmountable E6 cook Mafia ever assembled and sneak out with a to go plate for one of one of my soldiers without getting carded."

SSG Leary C Co, 2-28: "To be a good father to my son, who will be born June 2009."

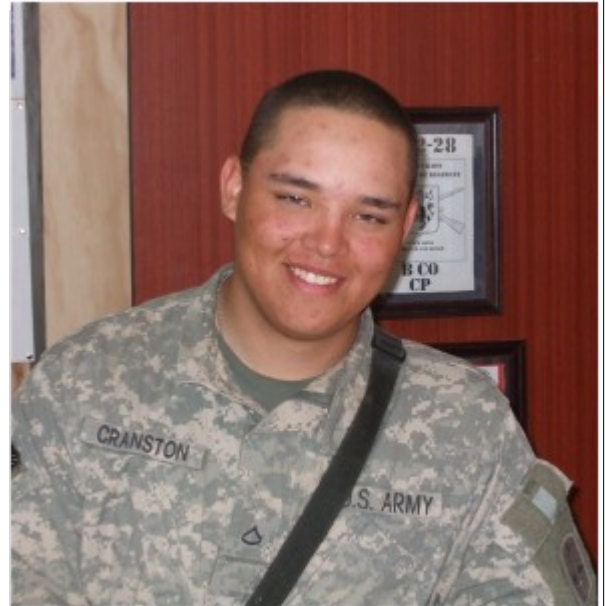


SPC Maldonado, C Co 2-28 "To lose a little weight"

SSG Davidson C Co. 2-28 "To make it back to my family and to make good decisions and keep my Soldiers safe"



SPC Thompson, B Co.. "To do less with more.... Oh wait, that's not right...."

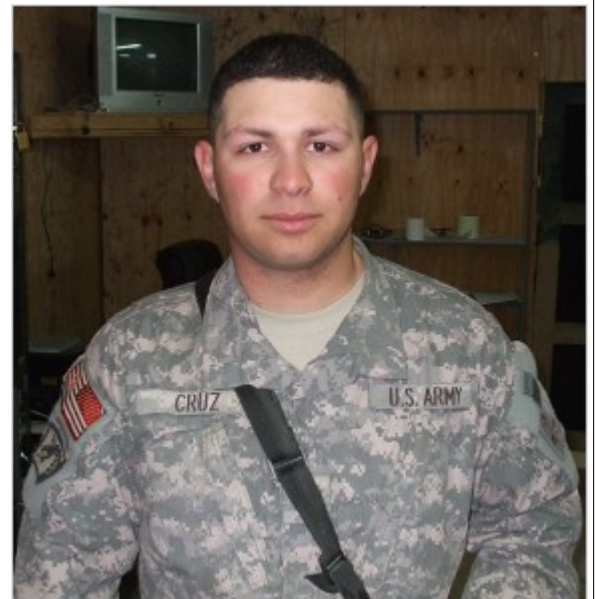


PFC Cranston, B Co: "I didn't make one because I was too busy... pulling guard"

SPC Thomas C Co: "I will start eating healthy and improve my physical Fitness."

SPC Hulett, C Co: "Raise my GT Score, invest in a new car, quit smoking, take college courses on line, get promoted to E-5."

PFC Quintanilla. "C co 2-28 Be able to bench at least 200."



SGT Cruz, Charlie Tank "To save and build towards having a family"

CONGRATULATIONS

Best Wishes to Our January Birthdays

Chad Steele	SSG	4-Jan	Scott Morgan	PFC	18-Jan
Todd Bair	SFC	7-Jan	James Shade	PFC	21-Jan
Edward Peterson	SGT	9-Jan	Oscar Lopez	PFC	22-Jan
Bryan Rolen	SPC	24-Jan	Jeramey Mason	PFC	29-Jan
Rommell Stoutedeleon	SGT	4-Jan	Marcus Florez	PV2	22-Jan
Oscar De Alba	SGT	18-Jan	Joshua Matson	PFC	1-Jan
Antonio Salazar	SGT	12-Jan	Gordon Lopez	PFC	11-Jan
Ryan Knudsen	SGT	26-Jan	Joshua Wright	SGT	11-Jan
Kevin Terry	SSG	9-Jan	Benjamin Cruz	CPL	17-Jan
Akeem Jones	PFC	2-Jan	Timothy Hinman	SPC	18-Jan
Wesley Harvey	SPC	4-Jan	Taylor Young	SPC	4-Jan
Larry Carroll	SGT	18-Jan	Brian Baxer	SPC	20-Jan
Jamal Brown	SPC	22-Jan	Joshua Putnam	SPC	27-Jan
Timothy Ledezma	SPC	25-Jan	Jordan Cox	PFC	30-Jan
Brennan Sanders	PV1	1-Jan	James Beda	SGT	31-Jan
Jajmere Williams	PFC	27-Jan	Jacob Gohlmann	PFC	18-Jan
Samuel Garrison	1LT	19-Jan	Jose Juarez	PFC	15-Jan
Eddy Chiang	PFC	15-Jan	Bryant Woodberry	SGT	19-Jan
Steven McCallister	SPC	2-Jan	Ianclaire Mallari	SGT	29-Jan
Mackenzey Christophe	SSG	26-Jan	Scott Dabill	SGT	18-Jan
Dean Labonte	SSG	11-Jan	William Branch	1LT	22-Jan
Anthony Escalante	SGT	18-Jan	Charles Bolton	SPC	31-Jan
Daniel Esget	PV2	5-Jan	Darnell Abdulraheen	SPC	7-Jan
Ronald Dycus	SPC	9-Jan	Christopher Cranston	PV2	22-Jan